

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
TO THE
THIRSK RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
FOR THE
Year ending December 31st, 1920.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my Annual Report for the year 1920. Much of it is necessarily a repetition of previous years, but in order to insure uniformity of Reports the Ministry of Health yearly sends a Memorandum to follow, thus causing a certain amount of repetition.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Area of District (land and inland water)	...	64,024 acres,
Population—Census 1911	... ..	12,792
Population—estimated for 1920	... ..	12,735
Number of Townships	... ..	49
Number of inhabited houses	... ..	2,961
Average number of persons per house	... ..	4.32

HOSPITALS FOR THE AREA.

LAMBERT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL. Maintained by endowment and public subscriptions. 9 beds. This hospital is for the inhabitants of Thirsk and Sowerby and the neighbouring district. As the Rural District extends on the one hand from Langthorpe to Kewick and on the other hand from Pickhill to Kilburn, the hospital does not provide for these outlying parishes, the sick from these places being admitted to Northallerton, York, etc.

THE UNION HOSPITAL.

THE ISOLATION HOSPITAL. 12 beds. In connection with this hospital I would like to remind you that this year we had what was during the typhoid epidemic a nurses dormitory converted into two small wards, so that we are now in a position not only to take in suspected cases or suspected carrier cases but also to treat two classes of infectious disease simultaneously. With a little addition to the original building we have now very suitable hospital accomodation, and I may say that Dr. Newsholme, the County Medical Officer at his inspection of the hospital expressed his satisfaction with the arrangements.

DISTRICT NURSES.

There are two of these in our District and a third at Langthorpe does very efficient work around that portion of our District which lies to that locality. Of the other two, one does the district work of Sowerby and her services are very highly appreciated. The other is for Thirsk, Carlton Miniott and South Kilvington. She also does work under Maternity and Child Welfare, Health Visiting and School Nursing.

CHIEF OCCUPATIONS.

Agriculture, Foundry Work and Artisan. There are no trades or occupations having a directly pernicious influence on the health of the District.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The Tables appended shew the total number of Births and Deaths attributable to the District, the Tables being supplied by the Registrar General.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

1. WATER. The water supply for the District remains practically the same as formerly, although there are several new schemes on hand with a prospect of completion during 1921. There were no complaints of shortage of supplies during the year.

2. RIVERS AND STREAMS. These are the same as in former years. The beck at Pickhill, Kilburn and Sutton receive the sewage directly without Interception Tanks.

3. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE. Septic Tanks, 25 in number, are used for the treatment of sewage. At Thornton-le-Moor there is a sewage farm which is under the supervision of the Sanitary Surveyor.

4. CLOSET ACCOMODATION. In Thirsk and Sowerby closet accomodation is by water closets, pan closets and privy ashpits. In the rest of the District chiefly by privy ashpits although a good many of the the larger houses have water closets draining into septic tanks. No great alteration has been made during the year and much remains to be done to improve this state of affairs. In some of the terraces the only thoroughfare is between the backs of the rows of houses, and as the ashpits are adjacent to the road there is a probability of fish, vegetables, etc., sold off carts being contaminated by flies. All movable ashbins and pans are emptied weekly.

5. SCAVENGING. In Thirsk and Sowerby this is under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector and performed by the Council. In the outlying district where this is impossible the tenants are responsible, the Sanitary Inspector paying periodic visits to see the work is carried out.

6. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT. Visits in company with the Inspector are made in connection with housing defects, infectious diseases, etc, and dealt with according to the circumstances found. A summary of inspections and results as supplied by the Sanitary Inspector is appended.

7. PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYELAWS AND REGULATIONS. Factories and Workshops. See separate Table.

Slaughter Houses. There are 10 slaughter houses. These are regularly inspected and found satisfactory, and where necessary orders are given and carried out.

Bake Houses. All clean and satisfactory.

Cellar Dwellings. None.

Lodging Houses. None.

Cow Byres. Regularly inspected and instructions given.

SCHOOLS.

The hygienic condition of the schools are satisfactory, although many closures for infectious disease were made.

The following closures were made :—

5th January, 1920	Catton	3 weeks for Measles.
19th January, 1920	Newby Wiske	3 weeks for Mumps.
18th February, 1920	Topcliffe	14 days for Diphtheria.
4th May, 1920	Pickhill	3 weeks for Whooping Cough.
10th May, 1920	Kirby Knowle	7 days for Infectious Cold.
26th June, 1920	Dalton	14 days for Mumps.
18th October, 1920	Carlton Miniott	3 weeks for Diphtheria.
17th December, 1920	Birdforth	3 weeks for Diphtheria.

With regard to these one or two require comment. At Topcliffe there was a death from Diphtheria and a second child attending school developed the disease. The school was accordingly closed and disinfected and the disease stamped out. At Kirby Knowle there was an epidemic of an infectious cold reported to me by Dr. Roberts, most of the cases occurring in school children. The school was closed for a week and, the disease being of short duration, there was no recurrence on opening. There were two cases of Diphtheria at Carlton Miniott both of children attending school. A closing order was sent and the school disinfected. Birdforth school was closed on account of Diphtheria occurring in the Easingwold Area at a part of the district from which the children attended this school. The school was disinfected.

FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY. The milk supplies are as in former years and are satisfactory, no action having to be taken. The Cow Sheds are under the inspection of the Sanitary Inspector who reports them to be fairly satisfactory.

MILK (MOTHER AND CHILDREN'S ORDER, 1919). The consensus of medical opinion in the district was that no difficulty in obtaining milk was found and no action was taken under this Order.

MEAT. Slaughter houses are regularly inspected by the Sanitary Inspector who reports their condition as satisfactory.

There is no Public Abattoir but visits are paid by the Sanitary Inspector to the 10 slaughter houses in the Area. No meat has been condemned as unfit for human consumption and no carcasses or parts thereof have been condemned for tuberculosis.

Licensed.	In 1914.	In January, 1920	In December, 1920.
	10	10	10
Total.	10	10	10

OTHER FOODS. No complaints have been received and no food of such a nature as to be unfit for human consumption has had to be dealt with.

Action under Sale of Food and Drugs Act. Nil.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

As I have in a previous part of my Report commented on the Isolation Hospital nothing further need be said here. There is no resident nurse but the arrangement with the Purey Cust Nursing Home at York for providing such nursing help as is required is still in use and satisfactory. Diphtheria Anti-toxin is provided for the use of medical practitioners in the District. Disinfection is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector. The Council has its bacteriological work carried out by arrangement with the Clinical Research Association and this is largely taken advantage of and is satisfactory. No cases of Encephalitis Lethargica, Pneumonia, Malaria, Dysentery or Trench Fever was notified during the year.

WHOOPING COUGH. There were 4 deaths due to Whooping Cough and although out of the 27 cases notified this seems a large death rate the fact is that many cases occurred but only those which became serious ever came under the notice of a doctor. The deaths were of children of 2, 5, 12 and 18 months respectively, thus shewing Whooping Cough to be a very serious disease in young children, a fact often overlooked.

DIPHTHERIA. During the year 12 cases were notified and resulted in 2 deaths, 1 a child of 5 years, who was removed to the Isolation Hospital, the other an infant of 2 months who was isolated at home.

INFLUENZA. There were 4 deaths from Influenza, 1 a woman of 22 who developed Pneumonia, the others were old people, 2 of 81 years, and one of 71.

MEASLES. 35 cases of Measles were notified, 34 in the first quarter and 1 in the second.

ERYSIPELAS. 1 case was notified.

SCARLET FEVER. There were 10 cases of Scarlet Fever notified during the year. Eight of these, of whom seven were treated in the Isolation Hospital, were in the first quarter and really part of the epidemic occurring in the fourth quarter of 1919 and reported on specially at the time. One other case was notified in the second quarter and one in the last quarter, that in the second quarter being treated in the Isolation Hospital. No case of Anthrax or Rabies was reported. No arrangement for cleansing and disinfection of verminous persons exists, the only case requiring such treatment was accommodated at the Workhouse.

TUBERCULOSIS. 6 deaths occurred during the year from Tuberculosis. These had been notified in previous years with the exception of 2 who were suffering from the disease before coming into the District. Only 1 notification was received during the year. The Council has no provision for treating these cases. Isolation has to be carried out at home and instructions as to personal and general hygiene are given. In one case an open-air shelter was obtained from the Northallerton R. D. Council but was not made much use of.

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM. 1 case was notified, which completely recovered.

PUERPERAL FEVER. No case was notified.

Cases of other infectious disease occurring in the District have been commented on in a previous part of the Report.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

STAFF. Clerk, Medical Officer of Health, Sanitary Inspector and Sanitary Surveyor.

HOSPITAL ACCOMODATION. As previously included in Report.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK. As already mentioned this is done by the Clinical Research Association. 27 Swabs were sent for detection of Diphtheria. 22 were negative and 5 positive. 2 Sputa were sent. Neither shewed presence of Tubercle Bacillus.

HOUSING.

The housing conditions are much the same as reported last year. There is still a shortage of housing accomodation but some provision has been and is being made. I am indebted to Mr. Hawley for the particulars supplied.

1. GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS. There is a shortage of houses to meet which 16 schemes are in contemplation. Sites have been purchased or are awaiting completion. 2 houses will be ready for occupation in about a month and others in succeeding months. Tenders for other 14 houses are under consideration of the Ministry of Health. The Schemes progressing include the erection of 131 houses in the District.

2. OVERCROWDING.

- (1) Extent. 69 houses 2 or more families. (By Survey Oct., 1919).
- (2) Causes. 2 or more families in 1 house. „
- (3) Measures for Remedying. Erection of houses as in Paragraph 1.
- (4) Cases reported. None reported during Year.

3. FITNESS OF HOUSES.

- (1) a. General Standard in District. Generally satisfactory for Rural Area.
- b. General Character of Defects. Delapidated and insanitary. Chiefly old.
- c. Defects due to improper supervision of owners. Not known.

2. General Action taken. Action to be taken as soon as houses available.

3. Much of the unfitness is due to such delapidations as would necessitate the temporary removal of the inhabitants of these houses, and as there is a shortage of houses it is difficult to get the work carried out.

4 UNHEALTHY AREAS. There are no areas of such a nature as to be dealt with as a whole under this part of the Housing Act.

APPENDICES.

Housing Conditions.

Statistics.

Year ended 31st December, 1920.

General.

The discrepancy between the Registrar General's figures and those obtained locally is very slight. In his the number of Deaths attributable to our Area is 152. Those registered in our Area are 144. Add to this 10 Inward Transfers and 3 Outward Transfers and the figure for the Area then becomes 151.

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|----------------------------------|----|----|----------------------------------|
| (1) Estimated Population | .. | .. | 12735 |
| (2) General Death Rate | .. | .. | 11.93 per 100 of the Population. |
| (3) Death Rate from Tuberculosis | | | 3.94 per cent total Deaths. |
| (4) Infantile Mortality | .. | .. | 92.52 per 1000 nett. Births. |

(5) Number of Dwelling-Houses of all classes.	3016
(6) Number of working-class Dwelling-Houses	Not ascertained.
(7) Number of new working-class houses erected.	5.

Unfit Dwelling-Houses.

Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects	..	75
Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	.. ..	43
Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	.. .. .	32
Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied by Owners		32
Proceedings under Sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909	.. .. .	Nil

UNHEALTHY AREAS. Nil.

Staff engaged in Housing Work. Housing Clerk and Clerk of Works.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. G. MACARTHUR,

28th May, 1921.

Medical Officer of Health.

Infectious Diseases Table, 1920.

DISEASE.	Total.	Quarter ending 31 March.	Quarter ending 30 June.	Quarter ending 30 Sept.	Quarter ending 31 Dec.
Diphtheria ...	12	4	—	—	8
Erysipelas ...	1	—	—	—	1
Measles ...	35	34	1	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	1	—	1	—	—
Scarlet Fever ...	10	8	1	—	1
Whooping Cough ...	27	3	10	13	1

THIRSK RURAL DISTRICT.

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Registrar-General's Return of Causes of Death, 1920.

CAUSES OF DEATH—CIVILIANS ONLY.					Males.	Females.
ALL CAUSES.					83	69
1	Enteric Fever	...	...	...	—	—
2	Small Pox	...	...	...	—	—
3	Measles	...	...	...	—	—
4	Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	—	—
5	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	3	1
6	Diphtheria and Croup	..	...	...	—	2
7	Influenza	...	...	...	3	1
8	Erysipelas	...	...	...	—	—
9	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	...	4	2
10	Tuberculous Meningitis	...	...	...	—	—
11	Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	..	...	1	1
12	Cancer—Malignant Disease	...	...	...	13	3
13	Rheumatic Fever	...	...	...	1	—
14	Meningitis	...	...	...	1	—
15	Organic Heart Disease	...	...	...	10	12
16	Bronchitis	...	...	...	5	6
17	Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	2	1
18	Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	—	2
19	Diarrhœa, &c., (under 2 years)	...	...	...	1	1
20	Appendicitis and Typhlitis	...	...	...	2	—
21	Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	...	—	—
22	Nephritis and Bright's Disease	...	...	...	2	2
23	Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	—	—
24	Parturition, apart from Puerpural Fever	...	...	...	—	—
25	Congenital Debility, &c.	...	..	...	5	6
26	Violence, apart from Suicide	...	...	...	2	—
27	Suicide	...	...	...	1	—
28	Other Defined Diseases	...	...	...	27	29
29	Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...	—	—
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age					13	13
Total					13	13
Illegitimate					2	—
Total Births					129	129
Males, 140					11	12
Females, 141					11	12
Legitimate					129	129
Illegitimate					11	12

Population (for Births and Deaths) 12,735

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the Population 22·06

Statement of Inspections, &c., for Year 1920,
as supplied by the Sanitary Inspector.

Total number of Inspections	...	...	1258
Comprised as follows :—			
Insanitary Privies	...	...	86
Accumulations of Ashes, &c.	...	...	120
Defective Drains	...	...	96
Defective Roofs, Eaves Spouting, &c.		...	60
Nuisances caused by keeping animals, &c.		...	6
Re-inspections	...	...	460
Slaughter Houses	...	..	120
Cowsheds, &c.	...	...	56
Factories and Workshops	...	...	120
Petroleum and Carbide Stores	...	...	30
Schools	...	...	10
Water Supplies	...	...	95

In addition to several verbal requests 116 Informal Notices and 17 Statutory Notices were served. All notices complied with.

Length of sewer re-laid at Carlton Miniott.

HOUSING.

75 houses have been inspected under the Public Healths Acts for defects, but owing to the insufficient housing accomodation in the District it has not been possible to take any steps towards closing any houses which are unfit for human habitation.

Informal action was taken by the Sanitary Officer and 43 houses were repaired. Statutory Notices affecting defects to 32 houses were served under the Public Health Acts and in each case the notice was complied with by the Owners.

Inspection of Factories, Workshops, and Workplaces.

Factories	45	Workshops	75	Workplaces	Nil	Total	120
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Defects found in Factories, Workshops, and Workplaces.

NIL.

Home Work.—NIL.

Registered Workshops.

Factories	24	Workshops	56	Total	80
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Other Matters.—NIL.